SURAH OF AL-MA’UN

THE RESEARCH:
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AL-MA’UN

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THE REFERENCES

1) https://quran.com/al-maun/info

2) https://quran.com/al-maun

BACK

THE BACKGROUND 1

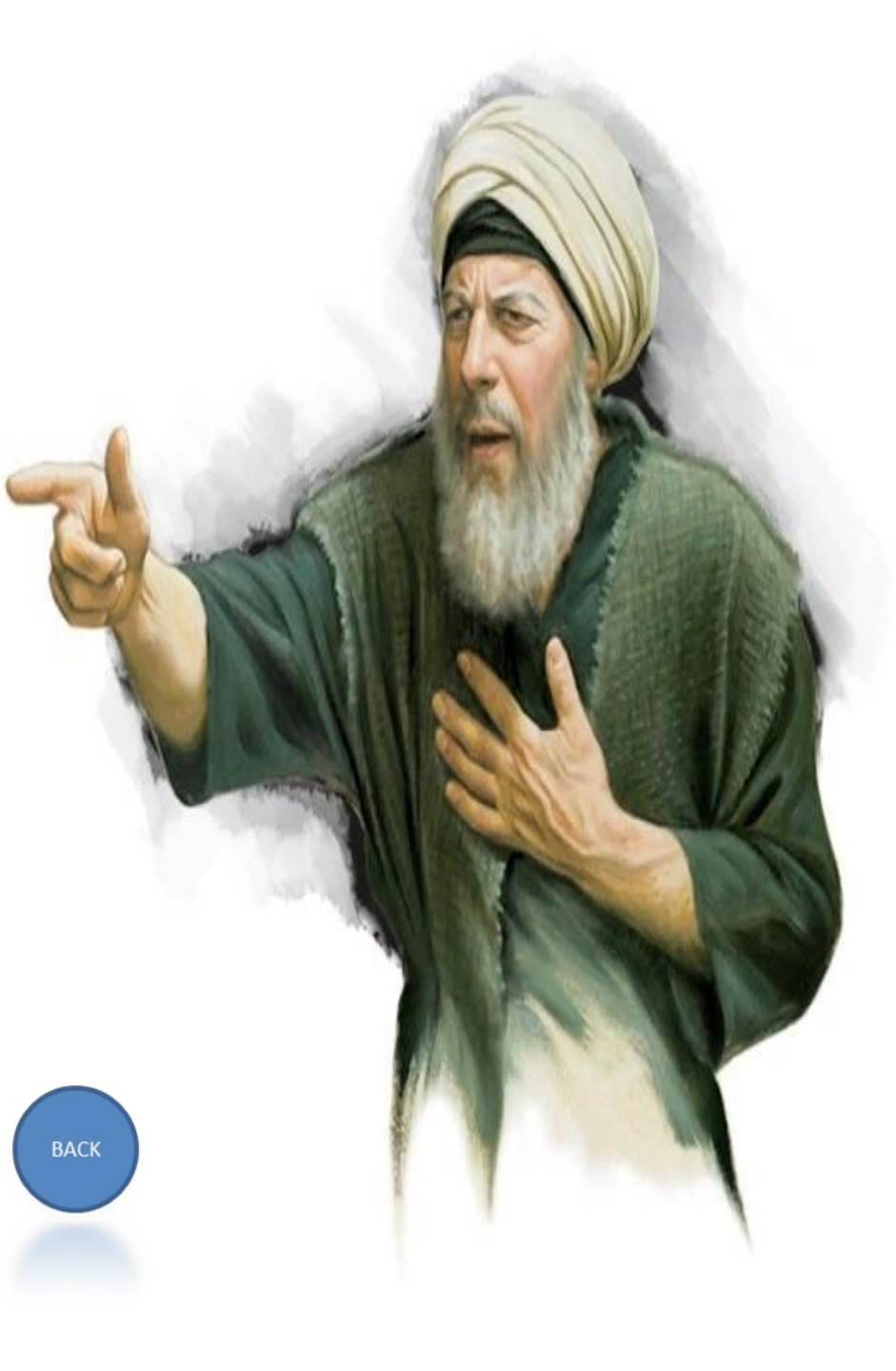
Adapted from Tafsir Ibn Ashur

Themes and purpose:

This surah exposes the hypocrisy of those who deny the Judgment. Its purpose is to define the characteristics of the spiritual denier: neglecting the orphan, refusing to feed the poor, being careless in prayer, and refusing to lend even small items (al-māʿūn), affirming that true religion requires ritual sincerity coupled with social compassion.

Revelation Period

- Era: There are different opinions, with some arguing that the first half (on denying the Judgment) is Makkan, and the second half (on neglecting prayer) is Madinan and addresses the hypocrites.
- Context: The surah addresses the wealthy elite (like Al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīrah) who were abusive towards the poor and who feigned prayer without sincerity.
- Chronology: On the view that it is Makkan, it is counted as the 17th surah in the order of revelation, revealed after Sūrat al-Takāthur and before al-Kāfirūn.



BACK

Name

The surah is known by various names: the most famous is "Sūrat al-Māʿūn" (Small Kindnesses) with reference to its final word. From the opening ayah, "Sūrat Araʾayta (alladhī)" (Have You Seen), "Sūrat al-Takdhīb" (The Denial), or "Sūrat al-Dīn" (The Religion/Judgment). From Ayah 2, "Sūrat al-Yatīm" (The Orphan).

Surah Overview:

- Exposing the spiritual reality of the one who denies the Day of Judgment. [1]
- Detailing the wicked deeds of the denier: abusing the orphan and failing to encourage the feeding of the poor. [2-3]
- Expressing the dire state of those who are careless, neglectful, or hypocritical in their prayer. [4-5]
- Condemning the act of showing off in one’s deeds and refusing to offer basic help. [6-7]

THE AYAT IN DETAILS 2

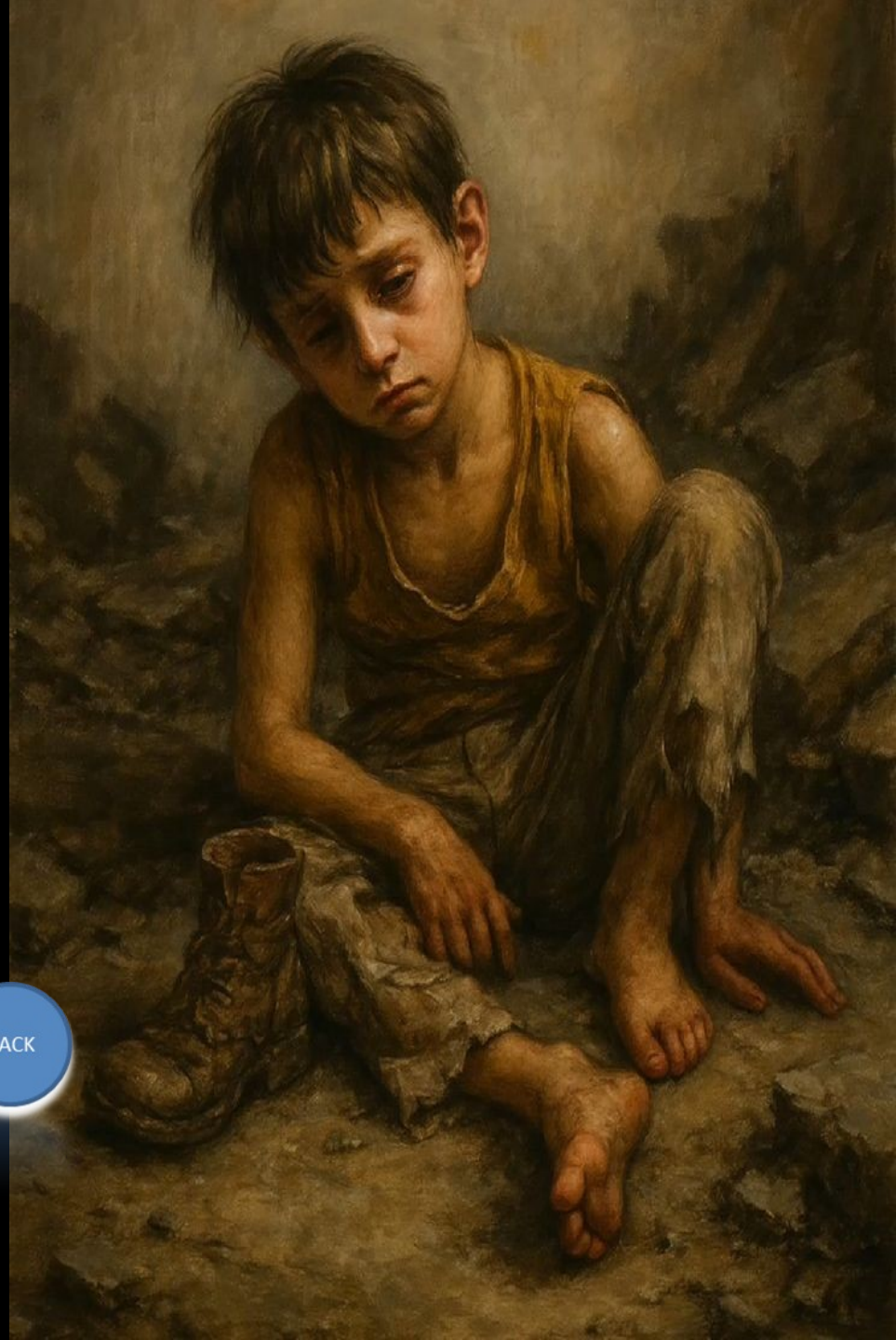
أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾

Have you seen the one who denies the □final□ Judgment?

BACK

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾ فَذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ
ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾ فَوَيْلٌ

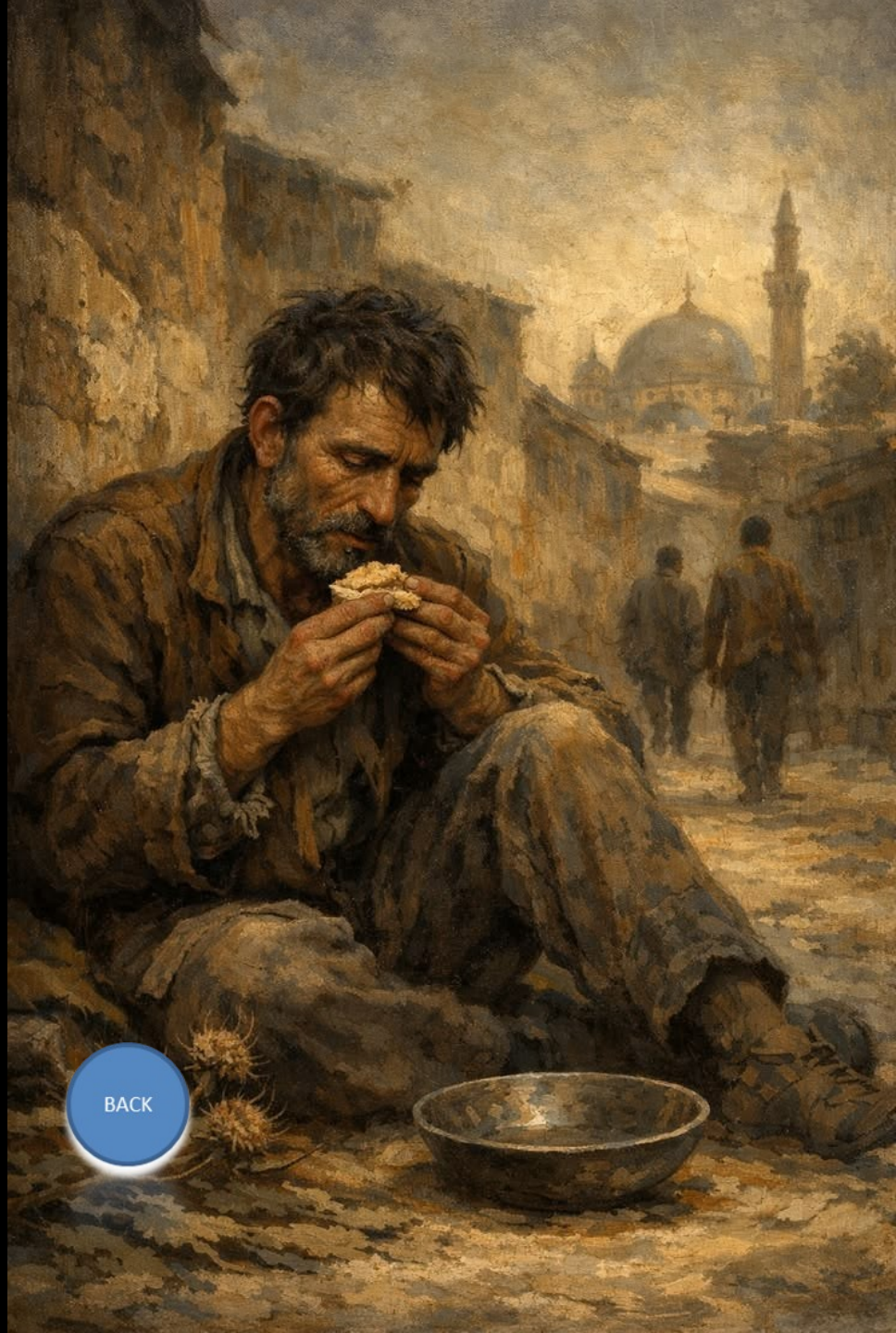
That is the one who repulses the orphan,



BACK

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾

and does not encourage the feeding of the poor.



ٱلْيَتِيمَ ۝٢ وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ۝٣ فَوَيْلٌ
لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ۝٤ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

So woe to those hypocrites who pray

لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ
﴿٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ﴿٧﴾

yet are unmindful of their prayers;

BACK

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ يُرَآءُونَ ٦

those who
only show
off,

وَيَمْنَعُونَ ٱلْمَاعُونَ ۝٧

and refuse to give even the simplest aid.1

Footnote - 1

They refuse to help others with small things like salt or water, let alone alms-tax.

EXCERCISES

BACK

1. Remembering (Recall)

1) How many verses are there in Surah Al-Ma'un?
2) Is Surah Al-Ma'un Makki or Madani?
3) What does the word "Al-Ma'un" mean?
4) Who does Allah describe in the first verse?

1. Remembering (Recall)

5) Which group of people are mentioned after those who deny the religion?
6) What does Allah say about those who are careless about their prayers?
7) What two bad qualities are mentioned in the last two verses?
8) Which needy group is specifically mentioned in the surah?

2. Understanding (Comprehension)

1) Why is refusing to help an orphan considered a sign of denying the religion?
2) Explain why encouraging others to feed the poor is important.
3) What does it mean to be "heedless of their prayer"?

2. Understanding (Comprehension)

1) Why are people who pray only to be seen by others criticized?

2) Explain the relationship between worship and good treatment of people in this surah.

3) How does Surah Al-Ma'un show that true faith affects a person's behavior?

3. Applying

1) How can you encourage others to care for the poor at school or in your community?
2) What can you do to avoid showing off when performing good deeds?
3) Describe ways to improve your concentration during prayer.

3. Applying

4) How can you show kindness to orphans even if you do not know one personally?

5) Give examples of small acts of kindness that are considered Ma'un in daily life.

6) What would you do if you saw someone refusing to share something simple that another person needed?

4. Analyzing

1) Compare the characteristics of a true believer with those described in Surah Al-Ma'un.
2) How are neglecting the rights of people and neglecting the rights of Allah connected?
3) Why are all the negative qualities mentioned in this surah linked together?

4. Analyzing

4) Analyze the order of the verses. Why does the surah begin with denying the religion and end with refusing small acts of kindness?

5) Which actions in the surah affect society the most? Explain your answer.

6) What do these qualities reveal about a person's heart and intentions?

5. Evaluating

1) Which bad characteristic mentioned in the surah do you think causes the greatest harm? Why?
2) Why is showing off in worship dangerous for both the individual and society?
3) Do you think small acts of kindness can make a big difference in a community? Support your opinion.

5. Evaluating

4) Why should Muslims care about both acts of worship and helping others?

5) Which lesson from Surah Al-Ma'un do you think is most needed today? Explain.

6) How does this surah challenge people who think worship alone is enough?

6. Creating (Higher-Order Thinking)

1) Design a poster that teaches the main message of Surah Al-Ma'un.
2) Write a short story about a child who learns the lessons of Surah Al-Ma'un.
3) Create a class campaign encouraging students to practice the teachings of the surah.

6. Creating (Higher-Order Thinking)

4) Write five practical actions you can do this week to apply the teachings of Surah Al-Ma'un.

5) Compose a short speech explaining how this surah can improve society.

6) Create a mind map connecting the main themes of the surah: faith, prayer, sincerity, kindness, caring for orphans, helping the poor, and helping others with everyday needs.

Higher-Order Reflection Questions

4) Why does Allah connect belief in the Hereafter with caring for vulnerable people?
5) How does Surah Al-Ma'un redefine what it means to be truly religious?
6) What would happen to a community if everyone practiced the teachings of this surah?

Higher-Order Reflection Questions

4) In what ways can someone appear religious while failing to live by the values taught in this surah?

5) How does Surah Al-Ma'un encourage both sincere worship and social responsibility?

6) If you had to summarize the message of Surah Al-Ma'un in one sentence, what would it be and why?

و الحمد لله رب العالمين